DRAFT

Statement on the Colorado Boycott

On November 19, 1992, several Lesbian and Gay activists climbed the steps of the Colorado State Capitol Building and called for a boycott of Colorado to protest the voters' passage of Amendment 2. Activists inside and outside of the state targetted the Colorado tourism and convention industries with a boycott in hopes that Amendment 2 would be repealed and that similar measures in other states would fail at the ballot box.

To this date, the boycott has generated a tremendous amount of media coverage concerning Amendment 2, and has exposed the threat civil rights opponents pose in our state and around the country. The state has suffered economic losses in the millions of dollars as over 120 organizations, cities and individuals have endorsed the boycott and/or pulled conventions out of the state and affirmed their commitments to the civil rights and human dignity of Lesbian and Gay people.

The economic loss and tarnished reputation of Colorado has prompted government officials and businesspersons in other states to mobilize and defeat anti-gay measures in 1994. In Idaho and Florida, the Chambers of Commerce have announced their opposition to anti-gay measures proposed in their respective states for 1994. In Michigan, conservative Republican Governor John Engler issued a statement which reads as follows: "I believe a Colorado-type amendment would have a negative impact if adopted in Michigan. Such an amendment could lead to tourists and convention planners boycotting our state, which would obviously have an adverse effect on our economy. Michigan does not need an amendment of this nature."

In Colorado, government and business leaders have come to the table with Lesbians and Gay men to address the threat that anti-democratic forces pose in our state.

While the boycott has been successful in raising public awareness and bringing people to the table that would not otherwise be there, it has also had some adverse effects. Cities such as Denver and Boulder and other areas throughout the state that voted overwhelmingly against Amendment 2, have been hit the hardest by the boycott, while counties and cities that voted strongly in favor of Amendment 2 have been virtually untouched. Ironically, Lesbian and Gay businesses and organizations, and people of color communities have been hurt the most, and the boycott has erected barriers which impede our coalition building and organizing efforts.

Not necessary
Let Boycotts enjoy the positive part of Boycott w/o the negative

We represent many parts of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual communities and we realize that the boycott is mainly being facilitated by forces outside of our state. People around the country, listen to the collective voices of Lesbian and Gay people in Colorado. If you really want to help Lesbian and Gay Coloradans, the best way is to end the boycott of Colorado.

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to the groups Around the Country (NYBC etc) who worked so tirelessly to make the Boycott the success it is. Also, we should encourage those who will now come because of this to Announce same and to Announce how much this change is worth, to Colorado.

We call on the people of this country to lift the boycott and come to our beautiful state to exercise their talents and expend their energy to help us educate people about the truth of the Lesbian and Gay experience and human dignity. We ask that people send technical and financial assistance to organizations in Colorado that are engaging in dialogue and outreach in communities in order to increase education efforts to change some of the attitudes which allowed Amendment 2 to pass in our state. We call on government officials and business leaders in the State of Colorado to take a strong, public stance for civil rights, and to provide technical and financial assistance for education efforts. The Lesbian and Gay community cannot fight this battle alone.

Civil Rights Bill

Lastly, we ask Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals everywhere to make a pledge to tell the truth about their experience; to live life more honestly, powerfully and with more integrity. Time and time again, we have observed that when someone knows a person who is Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, barriers are dismantled, myths and stereotypes are crushed and a greater understanding of respect and equality is reached. The battles we face as Lesbian, Gay men and Bisexuals are mostly inside ourselves not against people who want to see our lives codified into invisibility. If we all lived our lives openly, lovingly, and with greater integrity, we would all be "out" and being gay would not be an issue in this country. In the battles for justice that lay ahead, the only casualty will be the closet.

The Colorado boycott has been a highly successful tool in fighting anti-gay initiatives, however, it is easier to isolate than educate. It's time to re-focus our strategy and place strong emphasis on education and outreach. Judge Bayless's ruling that Amendment 2 is unconstitutional will not be the end of the struggle for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual civil rights.

We are committed to securing the civil rights of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, and to creating a society where people are safe, comfortable, and can live life to its fullest potential. We will work with organizations that decide to hold a convention in Colorado in order to help educate their memberships about Lesbian and Gay civil rights issues. We will work in coalition with other groups to protect democracy and our beloved country from extremism, and work with other Lesbian and Gay organizations so that our voice is heard, and move forward together. And, we will continue to speak out and fight in the courts, in the legislature, at the ballot box and in the streets until America keeps it sacred promise of liberty and justice for all. With our constant vigilance, our country will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed.

Thank you.

The one thing that Torie Osborn said when she was here that I agreed with was that when we call for the lifting of the boycott, it should be in the air of a joyous celebration of its success as we declare its demise and refocus strategy. This falls short. I also think we should specifically thank BCI for its wonderful efforts + point (1st Point)

Statement on Ending the Colorado Boycott

We call this press conference today to praise this legal victory and to thank the Plaintiffs, lawyers and organizations who with great dedication, sacrifice and courage have prevailed. Amendment 2 is unconstitutional for a number of substantial reasons eloquently enumerated in Judge Bayless's opinion. We do not believe that Amendment 2 will ever become law in this State.

Though the courts have rendered a blow to Amendment 2, we know the struggle is by no means over. Indeed, it has really just begun. We do not believe that those who would deprive us of our basic fundamental rights such as access to our governmental, political and judicial institutions for redress of grievances will stop their efforts. We expect that the people of Colorado will be seeing ballot initiatives on this subject, variations on a theme, for years to come.

Therefore, we call this conference to announce that we will continue to move forward in a positive way to inform the public about who we are and what we seek. We believe the more information to which the good people of Colorado and the Nation have access, the more likely we will eventually acquire equality of civil rights. We stand here before the people of this state and nation as representatives from Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual organizations around the state to make a unified statement regarding the Colorado boycott.

On November 19, 1992, several Lesbian and Gay activists climbed the steps of the Colorado State Capitol Building and called for a boycott of Colorado to protest the voters' passage of Amendment 2. The boycott has generated much media coverage concerning the injustices of Amendment 2, and has exposed the threat civil rights opponents pose in our state and around the country. The state has suffered economic losses in the millions of dollars as over 120 organizations, cities and individuals have endorsed the boycott and/or pulled conventions out of the state and affirmed their commitments to the civil rights and human dignity of Lesbian and Gay people.

The economic loss and tarnished reputation of Colorado has prompted government officials and businesspersons in other states to mobilize and defeat anti-gay measures in 1994. In Idaho and Florida, the Chambers of Commerce have announced their opposition to anti-gay measures proposed in their respective states for 1994.

We recognize that any boycott that is successful causes economic harm to some; that is the power and flaw of boycotts. Cities such as Denver and Boulder, and other areas throughout the state that voted against Amendment 2, have been hit hardest by the boycott, while counties and cities that voted strongly in favor of Amendment 2 have been virtually untouched. Ironically, Lesbian and Gay businesses and people of color who rely on the tourism industry for an income have been hurt most.

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It is now time to terminate the boycott. We have successfully thwarted the probability that this destructive amendment will ever become law in our state. We call on the people of this country to lift the boycott and come to our beautiful state to exercise their talents and help us educate people about the truth of the Lesbian and Gay experience and human dignity. We ask that people send technical and financial assistance to organizations in Colorado that are engaging in dialogue and outreach in communities in order to increase efforts to change some of the attitudes which allowed Amendment 2 to pass in our state. The Lesbian and Gay community cannot fight this battle alone.

Lastly, we encourage Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals everywhere to make a pledge to tell the truth about their experience; to live life honestly, powerfully and with integrity. Time and time again, we have observed that when someone knows a person who is Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, barriers are dismantled, myths and stereotypes are crushed and a greater understanding of respect and equality is reached. In the battles for justice that lay ahead, the only casualty will be the closet.

The Colorado boycott has been a tool in fighting anti-gay initiatives, however, it is easier to isolate than educate. It's time to re-focus our strategy and place strong emphasis on communication and outreach. Judge Bayless's ruling that Amendment 2 is unconstitutional will not be the end of the struggle for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual civil rights.

We are committed to securing the civil rights of all people, and creating a society where people are safe, comfortable, and can live life to its fullest potential. We will work in coalition with other groups to protect democracy and our beloved country from extremism and move forward together in a positive and affirmative manner. We will reach out to everyone in hopes that fear and misunderstanding will not be the primary force that dictates how we treat each other, but that goodwill, mutual respect and dignity will be the gifts of peace and harmony we give to each other. Lastly, we will continue to speak out and fight in the courts, in the legislature, at the ballot box and on the streets until America keeps it sacred promise of liberty and justice for all.

Thank you.

Terry,

This is close to the final -- I like it much better than the first -- Believe we will sign off on it. Would love the political power of Boycott Colorado + Come Out, Colorado joining essentially all but one or two groups in Colorado in the first such coalition + it is appropriate that the Boycott did this. I have the Boycott statement -- attached herewith. I would dearly love to be the one to send it to Equality + Care signed by Come out + BCI. What Power [redacted] would be showing (of course, you would add the P.C.. + make your groups statement if you wish.

If we could all join hands at last.

Love ya
Frank.

BOYCOTT STATEMENT OF STATE COALITION

We, the undersigned members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and supportive coalition of Colorado organizations opposed to Amendment 2, state the following:

The question of boycott is once again arising as we approach a decision from the United States Supreme Court. Should that decision be unfavorable, the Coalition does not support the reinstitution of the boycott at this time. Rather we invite gays, lesbians, bisexuals and our supporters "TO COME OUT TO COLORADO" to lend support, increase visibility and to send a more positive message.

We realize that not all people can come to Colorado and that still others who are concerned with the civil rights implications of Amendment 2 may desire other directions.

We recognize the benefits that were derived from the boycott of Colorado following the passage of Amendment 2, especially as related to its effect on Amendment 2-like measures in other states. However, a boycott is not viewed as the best strategy at this time.

The potential threat to civil rights reflected in Amendment 2 is a major concern to many Americans. We in Colorado wholeheartedly welcome the continuing support of people from across the nation. We join with them in a desire to live in a peaceful society free from discrimination where differences are seen as enriching and diversity is celebrated.

Endorsed by:_____ Organization Name

Signed By (Print)_____

Signature_____

Date:_____